

IN THE SPECIFICATION

Please replace the originally filed specification with the enclosed substitute specification, excluding claims (37 1.125(b)).

IN THE CLAIMS

Please cancel claims 1 to 5 and insert new claims 6 to 22 as follows:

- ~~1~~ ⁶ An optical security article, comprising:
a substrate carrying printed information;
an optical security coating removably applied over the information on the substrate, the optical security coating carrying engraved optical elements; and
adhesive means adhesively securing the coating to the substrate, the adhesive means being resistant to accidental removal of the coating from the substrate by frictional forces, and permitting complete removal of the coating from the substrate without damaging or altering the printed information on the substrate, whereby the printed information is visible.
- ~~2~~ ⁷ The article as claimed in claim ~~6~~ ¹, including a transparent release coating applied to the substrate between the substrate and optical security coating for preventing permanent adhesion of the optical security coating to the substrate.
- ~~3~~ ⁸ The article as claimed in claim ~~6~~ ¹, wherein the optical security coating includes stripping agents for preventing the coating from being permanently adhered to the substrate.

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4 ~~9~~ The article as claimed in claim ~~6~~¹, wherein the optical security coating is opaque, whereby the coating hides the information printed on the substrate until it is removed.

5 ~~10~~ The article as claimed in claim ~~6~~¹, wherein the optical elements are selected from a group consisting of holograms, diffraction gradients, optically variable diffraction elements (OVD), dot matrix elements, computer-generated holograms, stereograms, hexelgrams, and kinegrams.

6 ~~11~~ The article as claimed in claim ~~6~~¹, wherein the printed information on the substrate is selected from a group consisting of activation codes, prizes, codes, photographs, logos, and numbers.

7 ~~12~~ The article as claimed in claim ~~6~~¹, including a first coating on the substrate for preventing permanent adhesion of the optical coating to the substrate, and a second coating removably applied over the first coating, the second coating being engraved with a predetermined optical image, the first coating comprising a first lacquer material having a first adhesive strength and the second coating comprising a second lacquer material having a second adhesive strength less than the first adhesive strength, whereby the second lacquer material can be scratched off the first coating.

8 ~~13~~ The article as claimed in claim ~~6~~¹, wherein the optical security coating has adhesive characteristics providing said adhesive means for temporarily adhering the coating to the substrate.

9 ~~14~~ The article as claimed in claim ~~6~~¹, wherein the optical security coating includes an optically engraved lacquer layer and a metal coating.

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- 10 15. An optical security article, comprising:
- a substrate carrying printed information;
 - an optical security coating removably applied over the information on the substrate, the optical security coating having engraved optical elements; and
 - the optical security coating having an adhesive component for adhesively securing the coating to the substrate, the adhesive component having a predetermined adherence strength for resisting accidental removal of the coating from the substrate by frictional forces, and permitting complete removal of the coating from the substrate by scratching or scraping it off the substrate without damaging or altering the printed information on the substrate.

16. A method of applying a security coating to a substrate in order to cover printed information on the substrate, comprising the steps of:

applying a removable coating to a predetermined area of a substrate carrying indicia by a transfer printing process;

either prior to or after the application of the coating to the substrate, engraving optical security elements into the coating; and

adhering the coating to the substrate with sufficient adherence strength to resist accidental removal of the coating, but preventing permanent adherence of the coating to the substrate, whereby the coating can be removed from the substrate without damaging or altering the printed information by scratching or scraping off the coating.

17. The method as claimed in claim 16, including the step of applying a first coating to the substrate prior to application of the removable coating, the first coating having stripping properties to prevent permanent adhesion of the removable coating.

18. The method as claimed in claim 17, wherein the first coating is a lacquer containing a stripping agent.

19. The method as claimed in claim 17, wherein the step of applying the removable coating comprises application of the removable coating by flexography.

20. The method as claimed in claim 17, including the step of curing the first coating after application of the first coating, and prior to application of the second, removable coating.

21. The method as claimed in claim 17, wherein the removable coating is optically engraved prior to application to the substrate.

22. The method as claimed in claim 17, wherein the removable coating is optically engraved after application to the first coating.

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